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SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR SMALL STATES IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER: OPTIONS FOR NEPAL

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**SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR SMALL STATES IN THE
NEW WORLD ORDER: OPTIONS FOR NEPAL**

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ABSTRACT

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The post cold war period is marked by a new multi-dimensional strategic environment giving new focus to international relations and security of small states. Though the US is the only superpower, the world is moving to multipolarity and interdependence where regional powers and international systems have an increasingly powerful role. In such an environment small states are finding themselves even more vulnerable. This paper analyzes the security challenges small states face in the evolving new world order and suggests viable security options for small states in general and Nepal in particular. It analyzes the special characteristics of small states and their vulnerability to both traditional and new forms of threats. It relates national interests with world order and makes an in depth study of the security systems of balance of power and collective security from the perspective of a small state. It analyzes Nepal's regional and internal security environment as well as her historical setting and national interests. The paper then applies the concepts of security systems in the context of Nepal to determine viable security options.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the evolution of a new world order, the smaller states face new security challenges and must, therefore, reassess their approach to security. In the far more complex, interdependent and multipolar world, threats are not clear.[1] Smaller states are particularly vulnerable to the economical and informational instruments of power, internal conflict and regional powers which may covet their resources. Though Iraq's invasion of Kuwait met UN and US led multinational response, the US is likely to send troops abroad only when its "interest and values are sufficiently at stake."[2] The national interests of states is also likely to conflict with the international systems of collective security.[3] Small states, therefore, must also consider other approaches to security, from their own perspective.

For a small South Asian country Nepal, sandwiched between two Asian giants, security remains a major concern. Nepal lies in a region of conflict and tension not only of nuclear and conventional war but also of internal strife and militant sub nationalism. There is a need, therefore, to analyze various security options for Nepal to meet the security challenges in the 21st century. This paper will analyze the approaches to security from the perspective of a small state. It will attempt to discover viable security options for small states in general and for Nepal in particular.

Overview

In studying the security of small states it is important to understand what constitutes a small state, what are its characteristics, and how the security environment affects it. This paper will analyze the special aspects of small states in relation to the evolving security environment. It will also study both traditional and emerging new threats to small states.

The paper will then study various security systems of balance of power and collective security. It will study the relationship of national interest with the concept of world order. It will use historical examples of how small states have attempted to survive and relate it to the new environment. In particular, the paper will analyze the advantages and disadvantages of alliances, neutrality, and self-reliance, as well as international and regional security systems.

The security of small states will depend on their particular domestic and regional environments. In analyzing Nepal's security options the paper will first examine the South Asian environment. It will then study Nepal's security environment in relation to the instruments of national power, national interest and major concerns. The paper will then analyze viable security options and make recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

Characteristics of Small States

Definition

There are various definition of a small states.[4] Handel suggests " it is not the size of the state which matters but rather its relative strength" and uses the terms vulnerable and weak states.[5] Al - Hameli defines a small states as "a nation which can't wage total war in defense of her sovereignty" because of weakness in any of the elements of national power: geography, population size, and economic strength.[6] Though other elements such as relative strength of neighbors, national will and strategic location determine the vulnerability of states, Al- Hameli's analysis of small states provides a framework to categorize small states and to determine appropriate national security strategy.

Category

There are no standard criteria to determine what constitutes a small state. Using Al-Hameli's analysis a small state is one with a population of less than 5 million, an area less than 10,000 sq. miles or per capita income of less than 500 dollars. Accordingly small states fall into 7 categories with the largest number falling into the category of small states because of small GNP.[7] Perhaps for this reason, smallness of countries is associated with a "third world syndrome" meaning socio-economic and political problems affecting defense capabilities.[8] Another categorization proposes one limit of population for developed weak states (10 -15 million) and another for underdeveloped weak states (20 -30 million)[9]

Vulnerability of Small States

Traditionally small states are vulnerable because of geographic condition, small population or lack of economic strength. Small states lack strategic depth and are vulnerable to surprise attack. They, therefore, need to maintain strong forces, but may be hindered to do so because of a small population and lack of resources.[10] Geographical location also can make states vulnerable. Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Israel (Palestine) have been victims of their central geographical location. States not centrally located but of strategic importance and lightly defended may also be a victim of "power vacuum."[11] The Russian invasion of Afghanistan is an example of recent times. Landlocked states such as Nepal, Bolivia, Botswana are even more vulnerable to economic, political and military dominance by larger neighboring states. Small states may also be vulnerable because of scarce resources such as water or oil.

Threats to the Security of Small States

The concept of security and threat have broadened. Security of small states are increasingly considered in terms of territorial, political, economic, and technological security.[12] To this list Maniruzzman adds psychological and cultural security, emphasizing security of "core values of a nation."[13] Threats to small developing states also have external and internal dimension. For instance, territorial security concerns both external invasion and internal separatism. The most potent threat may now be internal conflict[14] and the disintegration of former Yugoslavia may have set a precedent.[15]

Internal conflict has a large number of causes including: the manipulation of ethnic, social or religious divisions; poverty and or underdevelopment; crime; corruption, or bad government and decisions; environmental decay; and population pressure. Many states (including developed ones) suffer these problems, but small, less developed ones are most vulnerable.

More Developed	Least Vulnerable	
Less Developed		Most Vulnerable
	Large	Small

Vulnerability to Internal Conflict (Fig. 1)

Small states also face a host of other threats. Singham suggests regional hegemons are more likely to intervene in their spheres of influence for political and other reasons including addressing "international scourge" such as drugs.[16] Other transnational threats such as terrorism and mass migration are also on the rise.[17] Small states are also especially susceptible to new trends of interdependence, international regimes, and information age technologies that "change people's perceptions of community."[18]

CHAPTER 3

Approaches to Security for Small States

National Security and World Order

National security of a state is relative to the security of other states and a favorable world order. Though there have been new proposals of a world with central authority, the nation state is likely to remain intact.[19] Claude argues "the conviction that world order and national security -- are closely linked" is acquiring a place in orthodox thought about international relations.[20] However, he cautions if states subordinate their concern for national security to the ideal of world order there will be no order and if states disregard or undermine world order there will be neither national security nor world order. He argues that national security is plural and an intelligent pursuit "must blend concerns for the order of the whole and the safety of the part."[21]

Security Systems

There are two basic approaches to security: balance of power and collective security. The balance of power system implies independent states managing their own relationship and states may choose alliance or neutrality. Collective security, on the other hand, "envisages an institutionalized arrangement for deterring or defeating aggression."[22] Under this system small states would rely on international system like the UN or regional system. While alliances tend to identify sets of friends and enemy, collective security asserts the primacy of

the world order and envisions meeting aggression with the collective strength of all the other states.[23]

Historically collective security systems have been less successful than balance of power systems. Many blame the realist concept of balance of power among states as the cause of World War I,[24] but main- stream thinkers hold that it was the collapse of the balance of power that led to war. Without a credible enforcement mechanism, collective security under the League of Nations also failed to prevent Nazi Germany from crushing the weaker states.[25] Following World War II collective security was restored within the UN organization but was of limited utility during the 40 years of the cold war. The UN did not build much confidence as the principal source of international order. Alliance and counter alliances such as NATO and Warsaw Pact were formed as a right to self defense.[26]

Many thought collective security had finally arrived after the Gulf War, but this proved premature. With super power consensus the UN's role has increased especially in resolving internal conflict, but the lack of a strong enforcement mechanism like NATO is likely to hamper the UN. [27] Many now believe the world is moving to the 18th century European type global balance of power system but with the economic element replacing the military strength as the primary component of state power.[28] Futurist approaches to the security of small states will therefore have to address the multi-dimensional issues transcending security systems, national interests and new trends in world order.

Alliance

Alliances are "a configuration of power wherein the state seeks security and the opportunity to advance its national interests by linking its power with that of one or more states with similar interests."[29] The Balkan League and NATO are examples of formal multilateral alliances among weak states and weak states with great powers. The 1956 alliance between France and Israel is an example of an informal bilateral alliance between a small state and a great power.[30] An alliance between a weak state and a more powerful one is one of necessity not preference.[31] Today with shifts to multipolarity and regional systems, alliances are based more on threat rather than responses to shifts in the balance of power.[32] The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was formed with this concept.[33]

Alliances have several advantages for small states. Alliances increase the power of nations by balancing the opposing group or deterring the threat. States can therefore save resources. Purchasing weapons also becomes easier for developing small states. The disadvantages of alliances are that weak states may loose some sovereignty if allied to a powerful neighbor especially if troops are stationed, e.g., India has troops in Bhutan and controls her defense and foreign policy. Alliance decisions can also affect the domestic or internal policies of a small state. Weaker states joining an alliance may be more threatened by groups in the opposing camp especially when the balance of power shifts.[34]

Neutrality

Under the balance of power system, small states may choose to stay neutral relying on diplomacy and or deterrence. The main advantage of neutrality is political independence but to be effective the neutral status of a state needs to be recognized by neighboring and big powers. More importantly, neutral states must be able to defend themselves or deter aggression and convince major powers that other powers will not have access to their territory.[35] Germany occupied Austria then violated Belgium's neutrality to attack into France. Germany also invaded Norway violating her neutrality to preempt allied forces from occupying it. Switzerland and Sweden have remained neutral and unscathed by maintaining strong defense capabilities requiring substantial expenditure.

Self Reliance

Small developing states can enhance their self reliance economically by making maximum use of available resources. States seeking to offset their "smallness" by increasing military expenditure often find economic and social costs crippling. A more successful formula for a small state has been maximizing its human resources for military purpose. Rather than maintain a large professional army, countries aim for an optimum "military participation ratio" by adopting a militia system in which armies are composed primarily of citizen soldiers.[36] Militia force structure offers certain benefits: ability to deploy large forces, reduced economic dislocation, and national social cohesiveness.[37] Though militia as the expression of "the nation in arms" made its mark with the armies of the

French Revolution,[38] it is the most ancient form of military organization. Most societies organized in tribes used it as did the American colonies. Nevertheless, the concept of militia is associated with small states whether they be the Greek city states, or the Swiss and Israeli forces in contemporary period.[39]

Another approach for a small state to achieve a high degree of self reliance is through weapons of mass destruction (WMD). In today's enhanced meaning of security "protection of national sovereignty also means the absence of nuclear or conventional blackmail."[40] Nuclear weapons provide both security and status. Realists argue that, in the principally self-help international system, many more countries would strive to acquire nuclear weapons.[41] The advantage of nuclear weapons are they may be used as deterrent against a vastly superior enemy; in confrontation with local contenders with nuclear weapons; or "to convey deterrent and compelling power against non nuclear rivals."[42] Against these advantages the cost and risks are: being a target to preemptive action (e.g. Israeli strike on Iraqi nuclear facilities); starting a local arms race of the South Asian variety; and the cost of building an effective system.[43] There is also the risk of such states being subjected to diplomatic and economic pressure.

Collective Security

Today, collective security as a strategy for maintaining international peace and stability, especially for small and third world states, is considered more "responsive than strategies such as balance of power."[44] The key to collective security is universality of participation and obligation. However, Goodway argues this "all-or nothing approach" may

be unrealistic, and in the future regional organization may have to spearhead collective security.[45] Goodway adds that the modern version of collective security "must stress the development and enforcement of international law and norms," encourage cooperation and not be seen as a hegemony power.[46]

In a collective security system small states can offset their weakness and become equal dialogue partners, but the system has difficulties. Participating states must fight to repel aggression and may be involved against their national interest in a potentially dangerous clash. To defend Kuwait meant attacking Iraq.[47] A good example of the shortcomings of collective security is the failure of Britain and France to take strict action against Italy for aggression against Ethiopia in the 1930's, because they hoped to enlist Mussolini as an ally against Hitler. Proliferation of WMD can also affect collective security as aggressors can resort to them. In general, collective security doesn't work well in a system that is badly divided.

Collective Security under UN

The UN charter enshrines the principle of the sovereign equality of states and legitimizes attack on inequality and dominance.[48] The major powers resist dominance of the UN by majority third world countries.[49] Some third world states fear the UN is another form of imperialism dominated by particular states and some accuse it of double standards.[50] The UN's response to massive human rights violations, civil wars and failing states has raised concerns that the UN is making inroads into traditional state prerogatives.[51] There is a view the Security Council should be given appropriate political guidance, support tools and that it

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must remain sensitive to national and regional issues. With such reforms and consensus can the UN be effective?

Ideally the UN is the only international medium for collective security. Under chapter six of the UN charter, conflicts should first be solved by peaceful means. Chapter seven, on the other hand, authorizes the UN to use collective force to meet aggression. Member States are obliged to provide the UN with armed forces and necessary support but there are no specific sanctions for not doing so. Though the UN had successes in Cambodia, Namibia, and Kuwait, these could be exceptions. The UN may be hampered in other cases as the use of force resides with the nation states and the Security Council lacks resources to implement Chapter seven.[52] For the more multi- dimensional and complex "new generation" peace operation there may be a need for quick reaction standby forces. Such a force could have averted the tragedy in Rwanda. However, standby forces would have problems of funding, command and control, interoperability and planning,

Regional Organization.

In the future, cooperation between the UN and regional organizations could be a viable approach to handle regional conflicts and assure security of small states. In the post cold war era regional conflicts are likely to be more prominent than major global geo-strategic or ideological conflicts.[53] As the origins of Third World conflicts are mainly indigenous, domestic and regional dynamics are critical in their shaping and resolution. However, there would still be a need for UN and great power cooperation mainly for resources and to check local or external hegemonies.[54] So far, the UN has handled regional

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conflicts whether in Bosnia, Cambodia, or Somalia in an ad hoc basis. A more formal relation between the UN and regional organizations could greatly facilitate regional conflict resolution.[55]

Lunn suggests the establishment of a Regional Security Commission (RSC) within the UN system "to act as a bridge between the reformed Security Council and the existing regional organization."[56] They would adopt a "common security" approach going beyond the traditional politico- military approach to embrace economic, environmental, arms trade and human rights. RSCs would be established on a continental basis, except Asia would be divided into Asia Pacific and West Asia. As Asia does not have an overarching organization like the other continents, RSC could serve as a forum for common understanding, security and prosperity. Lunn's concept is surely futuristic and may have problems with the UN Charter and financial support. It may be simpler just to develop the regional organization.[57] However, it is a step in the right direction to meet the challenges of the future.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) is one regional organization which has taken steps to develop the concept of regional security. The OAU Charter has placed the organization under the umbrella of the UN.[58] The OAU has also adopted a mechanism for conflict prevention management and resolution.[59] Though regional problems are best solved by regional organization, they can be hampered by lack of resources, question of neutrality and when a regional hegemon is part of the problem.[60] The OAU has had only limited successes so far, but the Organization of American States (OAS) has made inroads in settling disputes and peacekeeping in South America.

CHAPTER 4

South Asia and Nepal's Security Environment

Indo-Pak Conflict

South Asia remains one of the most potentially volatile regions of the world affecting the security dimension of both big and small states. The core of the region's problem has been the Indo-Pak conflict over Kashmir, only now the destructive power of both states includes short range nuclear and sophisticated weapons. This enhanced military power means not just a greater capacity to coerce, deter and defend but also that the cost of war outweighs any rational geo-political gain. " South Asia is therefore poised between danger and opportunity."[61] So far "India and Pakistan have engaged in propaganda, internal subversion and search for allies against each other."[62] The tension in South Asia, however, is not limited to Kashmir.

Indo-Centric

South Asia is "Indo- centric." As India is by far the largest power, no alliances of small states can challenge India. India alone borders all other states while no other pair of states are contiguous. Not surprisingly almost all of South Asia's quarrels are between India and the others.[63] The other countries' response, seeking extra-regional relations and support, reflect the characteristics of small countries in dealing with a powerful neighbor.[64] India's policy, on the other hand, has been to consolidate its hold in region by limiting role of extra regional powers' dealing with the smaller nations.[65]

China Factor

South Asia's strategic dynamics for both India and the smaller states, however, cannot remain aloof from neighboring China, an aspiring super power. China believes the international system is heading to multipolarity and emergence of regional hegemons. However, "Beijing does not accept India's dominant position in South Asia."[66] The Chinese believe in the five principles of coexistence[67] and have maintained close ties with the neighboring small countries Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. After the demise of the Soviet Union, relations between India and China have improved leading to freezing of border disputes, and an agreement on troop reduction.[68] While these developments have a positive effect on the security dimension of South Asia, any "collective" security arrangement in the region will need some accommodation with China.

Nuclear Issues

Nuclear China's proximity, together with India and Pakistan's virtual status as nuclear weapon states, is another issue affecting the security of South Asian states. Scholars claim nuclear weapons in South Asia could support stability. However, because of geographic proximity, any nuclear exchange will affect, not only India and Pakistan, but also other small states.[69] India has not signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on grounds of Chinese threat, and Pakistan is willing to sign only if India does first. Nuclear weapons thus pose a security dilemma for the small states in the region: face possible coercion, seek protection of nuclear umbrella, or develop some WMD capabilities themselves.

Internal Conflict

In South Asia more threatening than the nuclear issue is the haunting specter of internal conflict. With one fifth of mankind living in the region , a rapidly rising population, poverty and deteriorating environment, South Asia could be heading towards catastrophe. Large migration could affect the identity and security of small states. Ethnic separatism transcending international borders could cause a major crisis in state-and nation building.[70] Ethnic conflict in one country could cause interference from another as seen in India's involvement in the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka. The brutal "ethnic cleansing" of Bhutanese of Nepalese origin from Southern Bhutan is another example of the potential for conflict in South Asia.[71] The existing Hindu- Muslim tension also shows no signs of subsiding.

Regional Cooperation

Despite conflict, tension and an imbalance of power, the South Asian countries established South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to improve their socio-economic and cultural conditions. The very late move to regional cooperation was also because of a lack of common threat and hence no strategic consensus. The objectives of SAARC are mainly functional and address the non-controversial technical issues while the major issues of security, trade and the common development of resources are not included. SAARC has also been hampered because it cannot address bilateral problems though most problems faced by other South Asian states are bilateral problems with India. However,

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India's new policy of establishing better relations with her neighbors and the formation of South Asia Preferential Treaty Association (SAPTA), may lead to improved cooperation.[72]

SAPTA is a preferential arrangement where goods of member countries are levied reduced tariffs. In part, SAPTA was a necessity because South Asian countries would have faced difficulties to export their goods to other regional blocs with their own preferential rules.[73] In the future there may be a conflict between regional trading blocs and GATT. Inter-regional cooperation could also become significant affecting not only the economic but the security dimensions of states, in particular, small landlocked states like Nepal.

CHAPTER 5

Security Options for Nepal

Though small states share certain characteristics, each state has its own special strategic environment and must also approach security from the perspective of their historical setting, national interests and concerns. Nepal's security options can be determined by analyzing Nepal's special condition in the light of the various security systems of balance of power and collective security studied in Chapter 3.

Historical Setting

Wedged between China and India, Nepal has since its unification in 1769 followed a policy of neutrality and equiproximity with her neighbors. Such a policy was propounded by King Prithivi Narayan, the founder of modern Nepal who said "the kingdom is like a yam between two stones."[74] Owing to this policy together with her military capability to withstand Chinese and British invasion, no colonial flag has ever flown over Nepal. It was in pursuance of this policy that His Majesty King Birendra called for Nepal to be declared a "zone of peace" in 1975.[75] The recognition of this declaration by 110 countries including the US and China, though significant, is immaterial without India's endorsement.

Clearly Nepal's relationship with India will remain a key element in determining Nepal's strategic options. Nepal's attempt to pursue a totally independent and neutral policy has been at odds with Delhi's perception of Nepal forming part of India's security framework. India claims a "special relationship" under the 1950 treaty and has tried to

ensure that her "security concerns" are not compromised by Nepal's relationship with China.[76]

Another aspect of Indo-Nepal relationship is economic trade, transit and sharing of waters. For a landlocked country transit to the sea is a vital concern. The 1990 economic blockade of Nepal by India exposed not only this vulnerability of landlocked states, but also India's willingness to apply pressure.[77] After the establishment of multiparty democracy, India-Nepal relations have improved leading to the Mahakali River treaty. With Nepal and India having close cultural and religious ties, the future relations look prospective.

National Interests and Constraints

The strategic environment, geographical and historical setting have a bearing on Nepal's national interests which can be summarized as:

    a. preservation of national identify (preserving territorial integrity, political independence, national values and separate identify)

    b. internal harmony (national integration with ethnic and social cohesiveness)

    c. economic development (trade, transit and access to the sea)

    d. peace and stability (domestic, regional and global)

Nepal's major concerns are its size, location, regional conflicts, poverty and ethnic diversity. Being landlocked between two Asian powers has a bearing not only on Nepal's security concerns, but also on Nepal's economic development. Lack of regional cooperation has been an obstacle to develop Nepal's extensive water resources. Poverty and ethnic diversity may lead to great social upheavals and separations which have been the emerging

regional trends. So how can Nepal meet these challenges in the future - What are the options?

Neutrality: Zone of Peace Option

For a country situated between two powerful neighbors, staying neutral is one viable option. Nepal's historical position also reinforces this concept. Neutrality would also enhance Nepal's national identity and assure the support of China, a rising UN "veto" power. The obstacle could be India's suspicion and lack of full support in Nepal's development and the resort to pressure tactics. To be effective Nepal's neutrality must be recognized by neighboring powers. India has not supported Nepal's attempt to institutionalize peace with the zone of peace proposal. Furthermore, history has shown reliance on diplomacy alone may not be a sufficient deterrent in sudden upheavals of the status quo.

Self Reliance Option

To survive in the "anarchic world" states must ensure their own security by protecting their vital interest against external and internal threats.[78] This is especially so for small states. Together with the diplomatic approach of the zone of peace, Nepal should augment its defense potentials by a policy of deterrence based on self-reliance. To do so Nepal needs to maximize its instruments of power, especially its geographical conditions and people. Nepal's strategic lack of depth implies it could adopt several approaches: nation in arms; strong conventional defense, or resort to WMD.

The nation in arms is ideally suited for Nepal which has a large resource of renowned warriors and difficult mountain terrain. Such a policy will offset any lack in modern weapons while fighting strong forces, e.g., Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Chechnya. The main advantage would be the ability to mobilize large forces without having to maintain large expensive standing forces. The other benefits would be the development of a sense of duty, nationalism and a coherent society leading to ethnic integration. This approach would meet Nepal's interest of maintaining national identity and internal harmony. It is also in harmony with Clausewitz: coordination of the government, military and the people.

Another option could be to maintain a strong standing force and or WMD. A small country must have strong defense forces in order not to be surprised. Such a force can be economically crippling and may not withstand the far superior forces of neighboring countries. For survival, a nation must seek all avenues of approach and Nepal may consider the advantages of WMD as a deterrence. Reliance on WMD may, however, attract preemptive strike, diplomatic and economic coercion. Furthermore, the use of WMD is against Nepal's present policy. In the future, with the proliferation of such weapons, Nepal may need to keep her options open. For now, a mix of standing and reserve forces may be more pragmatic.

Alliance Option

An alliance is another approach that Nepal could adopt as a security option. An alliance with India could benefit Nepal economically and perhaps militarily, but this could mean some loss of national identity and political independence. This would also be a

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departure from Nepal's traditional posture. China could feel vulnerable at its underbelly Tibet and adopt a threatening posture, despite China's improving relations with India. An alliance with China would be even more impractical because of China's relative remoteness, India's proximity and control of Nepal's trade transit and access to the sea.

Regional Collective Security Option

With trends to regionalism, Nepal could consider regional collective security as an option. Though SAARC is not a collective security arrangement, as SAARC countries become interconnected, interdependent and prosperous, a sense of security will develop. SAARC could then be a forum for discussing collective security issues within the region. Though China supports South Asian cooperation,[79] a collective security arrangement of just the SAARC countries would be too narrow and China could perceive it as an alliance against her. The India/ Pakistan conflict would also be an obstacle. In the age of missiles, WMD and power projection, security cannot be confined to a small geographic area such as South Asia. Therefore, any effective collective security system will need to look beyond South Asia to encompass China and other Asian countries.

A broader Asian collective security system could be a more viable future option for Nepal. "The Asia Regional Forum remains an useful forum for cooperative security" but has limitations.[80] It also does not include all Asia Pacific countries. A formal Asia-Pacific region collective security and economic block, could greatly enhance regional cooperation and security while maintaining close ties with other Asia-Pacific powers such as the US. Such a regional bloc could work in close cooperation under the United Nation charter

(perhaps in conjunction with RSC as mentioned in Chapter 2) to resolve all security and other issues within the region. The disadvantage of such a diverse and monolith bloc could be the inability to reach consensus. However, arrangements could be made to discuss issues at sub-regional groups. Membership could also be a problem and there would be a need for all South Asian countries to join.

Collective Security under the UN Option

As the UN has the primary role of maintaining peace and security, collective security under the UN could be an option for Nepal. Nepal has always supported the UN and believes in its collective security and principles of the charter. Nepal believes in the legitimacy of the UN as the guarantor of the rule of law. Nepal has contributed immensely to peacekeeping and enforcement operations and has volunteered a stand-by force for the UN. Collective security of the UN has many advantages and after the cold war it has resolved many internal conflicts as well as naked aggression. However, the disadvantage of relying completely in the UN for security is that the UN may not be able to act effectively in all cases. For instance, in the case of Nepal the UN would find it difficult to use force against one of her neighbor because of their large size and China's membership in the Security Council. Nepal must, however, support not only the UN, but also develop links with all international agencies to maintain her national identity.

Multidimensional Approach: Vision for the future.

In an interdependent, multipolar, rapidly evolving strategic environment, it would be prudent not to rely on just one system of security but to adopt a multi-tiered flexible security in depth option. Nepal's traditional "zone of peace", and "equiproximity" policy, therefore, needs to be augmented with a credible deterrence of self-reliance. Nepal must equally pursue sub-regional cooperation for economic development. However, the bright future for Nepal lies in Asia Pacific for both economic and security concerns. Nepal must also continue to have faith in the UN system, which has the legal authority for maintaining peace and stability. So how can all these options be linked?

The answer could lie in a institutionalized system interlinking the UN, the region, sub-region and nation states. The Asia Pacific region would work in close cooperation with the UN in addressing the "comprehensive security" of the region. Similarly, the sub-region would interact with the region and nation in accordance with clear charters qualifying these relationships. The Marxist principle of " to each according to his needs" could be applied to determine the defense needs of each state. International and regional defense regimes could in the future help in arms control and limit size of armed forces to ensure security for the "parts and the whole".

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The end of the cold war has been marked by a new multidimensional strategic environment, giving new focus to international relations and security of small states. Though the US is the only superpower, the world is moving to multipolarity and interdependence, where regional power and international systems have an increasingly powerful role. In such an environment, small states are finding themselves more vulnerable and susceptible to their influence.

As small states are weak because of small geographic size or population, but particularly because of weak economies conditions, unless small states can improve their economies condition they are susceptible to internal conflict and separatism. Increasingly the resources of small states, particularly scarce resources such as oil and water, could be coveted by large neighboring states. The trends of separatism and national identity of ethnic group is increasingly affecting the very nature of state system and will be a major security concern.

Historically, small states have adopted various security system, but not all have been successful. The states that have followed the approach of self-reliance have generally been unscathed. To ensure the security of their vital interest, small states, therefore, need to either join a reliable alliance or maintain a credible defense posture whether it be in the form of a strong modern standing armed force, "nation in arms." or WMD.

Security of a state will also depend on the security of other states in the region and a favorable world order. The economic dimension of security is also gaining prominence. Small states, therefore, also need to move towards regionalism and international systems for comprehensive security. Collective security as an universal concept may not be successful, but could be effective if shared between the UN, the region, and international regimes. A comprehensive institutionalized system, dealing not only with conflict management, but also arms control and limiting size of armed forces (of each country according to defense needs) could substantially enhance security for all.

Nepal too must consider the global, regional and the domestic strategic environment and trend when determining her security option. Landlocked in the volatile South Asian environment between two of Asia's biggest powers, and with a potential for internal ethnic and social conflict, Nepal's security concern are immense. In the multidimensional security environment, Nepal's approach to security also needs to be multidimensional. There is a need to maximize the element of national power and balance diplomacy with credible deterrence and economic growth. The key, in the future, may be a more regional posture envisioning comprehensive collective security, but the "safety of the part" must never be out of sight.

ENDNOTES

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